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Professor Studying Ancient Iranian Tablets to Speak for Ides of November

Oct. 26, 2010

BLOOMINGTON, Ill. – Illinois Wesleyan University will welcome Professor of Assyriology Matthew Stolper on Monday, November 15 at 4 p.m. in Beckman Auditorium of The Ames Library (1 Ames Plaza, Bloomington). His talk, titled “Shattered Window on the Persian Empire: Rescuing the Persepolis Fortification Archive,” is sponsored by the Greek & Roman Studies Program, Eta Sigma Phi and the Classics Club, and is part of the Ides Lecture & Performance Series.

The director of the Persepolis Fortification Archive Project at the University of Chicago's Oriental Institute, Stolper studies clay tablets discovered in the ancient ruins of Persepolis in the 1930s by a University of Chicago expedition. Stolper is hoping to make the tens of thousands of the Persepolis clay tablets, which recorded the daily rule of Achaemenid Persian kings from 550-330 B.C., available online. American survivors of terrorist bombings are asking Federal courts to award them possession of the Persepolis Fortification tablets to satisfy punitive judgments against the Islamic Republic of Iran.

“There is only one Persepolis Fortification Archive,” Stolper said. “It’s the richest, densest, most complex source of information on the languages, society, institutions, and art of the Achaemenid Persian Empire. Breaking it up or losing it entirely without harvesting all of this information would leave a tragic wound in the history of civilization.”

For additional information about the speaker or the Ides series, contact the Greek and Roman Studies Program at (309) 556-3173.

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